

A

✓

N^o 23

SERMON

Preach'd in the

CHAPEL-ROYAL

OF

St. JAMES'S,

ON THE

Eighth Day of *August* 1714.

BEING THE

Day after the Death of the QUEEN.

WILLIAM REEVES Vicar of St. *Mary's* in
Reading, and Chaplain in Ordinary to
His Majesty.

*Pub'd at the Request of the Right Reverend
Father in God, John Lord Bishop of London,
and Dean of the Chapel.*

L O N D O N: ⓪

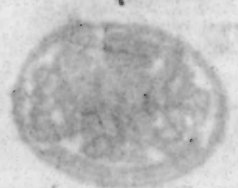
Printed by W. B. for RICHARD SARE near *Gray's-Inn*
Gate in *Holbourn*. 1714.

Price three Pence.

NOTICE

BY THE

OF THE



TO THE

OF THE

OF THE

OF THE

OF THE

OF THE

Rig

Lo

My

I

ereig

y m

nd t

a

Sen

priz



TO THE
RIGHT REVEREND Father in GOD,

O H N,
Lord Bishop of LONDON.

MY LORD,



*I*N Obedience to Your Com-
mands I publish this Sermon,
and must Apologize to Your
Lordship for having said no
more upon our late gracious
reign, whom you well know deserved so
much, and who requires the ablest
and to draw Her to the Life, and to con-
a just Idea of Her to Posterity. But
Sermon was prepared before the fatal
prize was thought of, and the strict At-
A 2 tendance

DEDICATION.

attendance in my Course of Waiting would
 me Time only to make that dutiful Reflexion
 on Her Sacred Memory, which the Subject
 naturally led me to in the Close of the
 course. I am willing to believe that there
 are none who think of making a Merit of
 the Living by injuring the Dead: His pre-
 sent Majesty stands in no need of the Service
 his People. And therefore after all the good
 Queen has suffered and done for the Church
 of England, after such a regular and
 unintermitting Course of Piety, and after all the
 Lordship has been Witness to in Her
 Hours, I hope She will be remember'd as
 sincere Defender of the Faith, as a true
 Lover of Her People, and as one of the best
 Christians that ever filled the Throne. I conclude
 with all imaginable Respect and Duty,

Your Lordship's

Most Obedient Son,

and most Humble Servant,

W. REEVE

MARC. vi. 16.

when Herod heard thereof, he said, it is John whom I beheaded, he is risen from the Dead.

JOHN the Baptist with a Freedom becoming a Man of God, without Reserve or mutinous Insinuation, told Herod plainly, *It was not lawful for him to have his Brother's Wife.* Before this Reproof the Tetrarch had been a great Admirer of John's Preaching, and the better too for many things for his Sermons; but the parting with Herodias was a thing he had not ears to hear of, and so the Preacher was sent to Prison, and barbarously put to Death about a Year after. But Wickedness is a fearful thing, and now the Blood-guilty Tyrant cannot get rid of the murdered Prophet, nor live in Quiet for the Dead. He may forget himself among his Flatterers, and bind Conscience for a while with the Time of Astonishment, but no sooner is the Virtue

Virtue of the Opiate spent, and the M
 therer in his Senses, but *John* is in
 Thoughts. The ghastly Image of t
 wondrous good Man walks in his M
 and seems to meet him at every Turn
 all the Drestes of Horrour. For the Fa
 of *Jesus* set his Imagination a working, a
 tho' some said, *It is Elias*, and others sa
 that it is a Prophet, or as one of the P
 phets; yet the conscious *Herod* can think
 no body but *John*. He had heard little
 a Resurrection, and seen no Miracles
 the Proof of that strange Doctrine; b
 yet upon the Suggestions of a guilty Co
 science, and upon hearing of *Jesus*,
 cou'd not forbear believing it: For wh
Herod heard thereof, he said, it is *John*
 whom I beheaded, he is risen from the dead
 Risen surely to testify his own Innocence
 and to take Vengeance on me and *Herod*
 From these words I propose,

First, To enquire into the Nature and
 Grounds of that Uneasiness and Fear, which
 pursues such wicked Persons as *Herod* was.

Secondly, To examine, whether it be
 the Art of Man totally to suppress the Op
 rations of a guilty Conscience. And then

Thirdly

at St. James's, Aug. 8. 1714. 3

Thirdly, I shall lay before you the Uses
are to make of this Enquiry,

My *First* Enquiry is into the Nature and
grounds of that Uneasiness and Fear,
which pursues such wicked Persons as He-
d was.

Now as Man is a rational Creature, it must
be agreeable to him to live up to the Di-
ctates of Reason and the Dignity of his
Nature; and in so doing, he must feel a
natural Satisfaction and Serenity, a Rest
and Acquiescency, like that of other Crea-
tures in their proper Place and Perfection.
For what Light is to the Eye, or Musick
to the Ear, that is Virtue to the Mind:
This is the thing it was made for: And in such
a State the Soul is situated as it wou'd be, in
its Element and natural Heaven. But when
Man acts against Reason he does Vio-
lence to himself, and this will give him
Pain and Unquietness of Spirit. For Plea-
sure arising from a Congruity between the
Object and the Faculty, and Man being
made after God's Image, while any Re-
mains of that Image continue upon the
Soul, while it has any divine Sensation or
Taste for Goodness left, it must as natu-
rally

4. A SERMON. Preach'd

rally be offended with Ungodliness, as
 Eye or the Ear is with Disproportion
 Discord. From which Incongruity betw
 Sin and a Soul after God's Likeness, I c
 clude, that a Sinner would be sick and
 easy from himself, had he no Fears o
 future Punishment. For what is unreason
 ble is against his Nature, and what is u
 natural must be unpleasing, till the C
 stom of sinning has worn out the divi
 Impression, and superinduced another N
 ture. And therefore it was divinely said
*Plato, --- Cou'd I make sure of God's Pa
 don and of Man's Ignorance, yet shou'd
 blush to sin merely for its natural Ti
 pitude.*

But then there is a much worse Une
 finess, that ariseth from a Fear of divi
 Vengeance, and this was the case of *Herod*
 And of this inward Confusion I know no
 a finer Description than that in the Bo
*Wisd. xvii. of Wisdom: For while they (the
 wicked Egyptians) supposed to lie hid in the
 secret Sins, they were scattered under
 dark veil of Forgetfulness; being horrible
 astonished and troubled with strange Appa
 ritions. For neither might the Corner the*

ld them keep them from Fear; but Nor-
as of Waters falling down, sounded
ut them, and sad Visions appeared unto
em with heavy Countenances. For Wic-
dness condemned by her own Witness is
y timorous, and being pressed with Con-
ence, always forecasteth grievous things, &c.
then what the Grounds are of these
ightful Presages of Vengeance, is the
question. We say, that they are groun-
upon a Law written in the Heart; be-
se without such a Law our Heart cou'd
approve or condemn us for any Action.
without a Law there cou'd be no Sin,
consequently no Foundation for an ac-
ing Conscience. What Reason can be
gn'd in Nature for the Fears of *Herod*,
only a Fore-persuasion, that Punishment
is due to Murther? Or how cou'd I be
bled for acting against my Conscience,
I not first believe, that I ought not to
any thing which my Conscience tells me
evil? And therefore such wise Men in
their own Conceit as wou'd lay the Foun-
tion of Religion in the *Legend of the Nur-*
ry, in the *frightful Stories of Spirits*, &c.
d do well to consider that such Stories

could take no hold of the Heart, with
a prior Notion of Good and Evil t
written. Because without such a No
we shou'd be conscious of nothing that
serv'd Punishment, and consequently
affected with any Stories about it.

Was not the Fear of a divine Vengea
natural, but purely owing to the Princip
of Education, then wou'd Persons impio
educated, be under no such frightful
prehesion. And Men of Parts and W
edness wou'd soon outgrow the Stories
the Nurse, and reason this childish I
perfectly out of the World. But yet, m
withstanding the vilest Education, m
withstanding all the Powers of Argume
and the various Methods of Oblivion, h
very few have been able to put themse
entirely out of the reach of Conscience
Some prosperous Sinners do indeed for
time make a lame shift to drag about
wounded Spirit, as some Wretches do
ill set Limb; but as this is apt to rem
us upon Alteration of Weather, so Con
eence too has its Season, and will be sure
remember us severely upon a Change
Health or Prosperity; and nothing but
b'roo
penta

at St. James's, Aug. 8. 1714. 7

grace can set us right, and make us
within. For Man is the only Crea-
ture that knows he must die, because the
only Creature concern'd after Death; and
his Knowledge of dying, join'd with the
suggestions of a guilty Mind, must needs dress
up a very distracted Scene, and let in Ter-
rors like an armed Man. For it is impos-
sible to prove there is no God and future
Judgment, and strong Arguments from
without, and violent Presumptions from
within, that there is both; and this must
leave a Sinner under doubt, and to be un-
der doubt, to call it no more, of suffering
mighty Vengeance to Extremity, and
without End: I know not what some
silly People may think of it, but to my
thinking, it looks like a dreadful Precipice:
enough to overset the Mind, and to turn
the Imagination round with Horror incom-
prehensible. And therefore wicked Men
do what they can to screen themselves from
the Prospect, and strive by all the Arts of
forgetfulness, to shove off the Thought of
another Life, which yet will ever and anon
rolling back upon the Mind. And this
brings me to the other Enquiry, Whether

§ . . . A SERMON Preach'd

it be in the Art of Man totally to suppress the Operations of a guilty Conscience.

I am apt to believe that most Sinners are met with upon Occasion, and smitten by their Conscience oftner than they are willing to speak of: That *even in Laughter* they have been sorrowful, and put on a Face of Joy in Publick when they felt the *Worm that never dies* gnawing at the Heart. While they are lusty and strong, and the *Tabret, and Pipe, and Wine* in their Feasts: While Business or Pleasure calls the Mind abroad, and holds it intent upon the World, so long perhaps they may be defended upon the Trouble of Self-reflection; but then Conscience in this Interval, *is not dead but sleepeth*: It is inebriated, but not extinct. For when the Sinner returns to himself, and is fit to be spoken with, Conscience will come forth like the *Fingers upon the Wall*, and will speak bitter things against him; especially if it happens to be poor, sick or miserable. But whether it be possible to extinguish Conscience perpetually, and in all Cases, is a Question of Difficulty. For if Conscience be a necessary Effect of Knowledge, then

wh

pp. A Sinner knows any thing of a God,
 ce. the difference between Good and Evil,
 inn. will be subject to the black Inferences of a
 nity Mind. And we are told *,
 ey. at never Man was more afraid
 ag. Death and a God, than *Epicurus* himself:
 on. inextinguishable were these Notions even
 t. the Days of Darkness, and in the Prince
 th. Deists. But then again, we have too
 ro. much Reason to believe, that some Men
 e. spite of Nature and Revelation also have
 af. lived to utter Darkness and Insensibility;
 nt. and therefore, in short, I would resolve the
 m. question thus: The first Principles of Mo-
 f- rality, such as God is to be worshipped,
 s. truth and Justice to be observ'd, &c. are
 m. sufficiently evident in themselves; but then
 the right Application of these general Prin-
 ciples to particular Actions, requires a good
 r. degree of Care and Impartiality; and while
 m. men are bent on the Pursuit of such things
 f. promise them any present Pleasure or
 B. advantage, they attend to those Reasons
 o. ly which make for their Passion, and do
 is. not that they can to avoid that Light which
 n. would shew them an unwelcome Truth;
 and when they have thus strengthened them-
 selves

* Tul. de Nat.
 Deor. lib. 1.

selves in their Wickedness, and by continually trampling upon Conscience, make it as hard as they are able, then God by his Judgment delivers them up to a peremptory Induration, to commit all Iniquities with Greediness. We have the Judgment and the Reason of it too expressly assign'd Rom. i. 18. *St. Paul; Because they did not to retain God in their Knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate Mind.* And it is to withdraw that Light from the Mind which has no Influence upon the Heart, and to make that their Punishment which was their Choice.

But then the obdurate Wretch has lost all Reason (God knows) to rejoice that he is past feeling: For he has a *Mortification* of his Soul, and is past the keenest Operations of Conscience, and consequently past all Hopes of a Cure. He is permitted for a while to sit down quietly in the *Seat of Scornful*, to make a mock of Sin, and to enjoy his Jest and Stupefaction, 'till he finds himself awake in that Place he so often derided, where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of Teeth for ever. A wounded Spirit is indeed the hardest thing

but yet we may *lift up our Eyes in*
Torment with some Comfort, and bless
that we have the Sense to feel it, and
not unto *every good Work reprobate.*
while there is any Sense of Sin, any
in Conscience, there is Hope of A-
mendment. Hope that in this our Day
may see the things that belong to our
present and eternal Peace, before they are
recoverably hid from our Eyes. Having
enquired into the Nature and Grounds
that Uneasiness and Fear, which pur-
sue such wicked Persons as *Herod* was :
and likewise, Whether it be in the Art of
totally to suppress the Operations of
guilty Conscience ; I come now in the
Place, To lay before you the Uses we
to make of this Enquiry.

And first, From what has been said we
may observe the Goodness of God in ma-
king it so hard a thing to be undone : To
extremely wicked of a sudden. He has
planted a Law in the Heart, and fenced it
about with Fear and Shame, and set Con-
science, like an Angel with a flaming
sword, to guard it on every side. So that
before a Man can arrive to be a consum-
mate

mate Sinner, he must go thro' a tedious
Course of Drudgery and Reluctance :
must take the Kingdom of Darkness by
violence, and be at sad Pains for Dan-
tion. For struggling Nature will hold
a long time : She will blush and trem-
ble at a bold Sin for many Years, nor will
ever give up all her Virtues without a
long and terrible Dispute. Tho' *Herod*
taken his Brother's Wife, and gone to great
Lengths in many other Sins, yet a Petition
for the *Baptist's* Head in a Charger sur-
prised him for a time with Horror ; He
exceeding sorry in the midst of Excess
Gaiety, even at *Supper* with his *Lords*,
Captains, and *chief Estates* of *Galilee*.
How strong a Provision against Sin has God
interwoven in our Nature. Our good Cre-
ator, like a tender Parent, has provided
Mankind with a faithful Tutor, a Tutor
that will be about our Path, and about our
Bed, and will spy out all our Ways : This
will instruct, admonish, chastize and watch
over us continually ; so that if we will
submit to be tutor'd by Conscience, we shall
keep *undefiled and innocent from the great*
Offence.

How then shall we answer it, either to
 God or to our selves, that we have so often
 broke through all these strong-holds of Na-
 ture and Grace, and gone *through Fire and*
Water for the miserable Wages of Sin? We
 have suffered Precept upon Precept, and
 Remorse upon Remorse, and yet feel Con-
 science, like a true Friend, labouring from
 the Rising of the Sun to the Going-down
 thereof to rescue us from eternal Destructi-
 on; and therefore we must confess our De-
 struction to be from our selves; we shall be
 forced to justify God in our Torments, and
 clear him when he is judged. Let us
 stand in Awe of our Selves, and sin
 ; and when Conscience looks withfully
 on us, and rebukes us, let us reverence
 as a Messenger sent from God for our Sal-
 vation: As when the *Lord turned and looked*
on Peter after his repeated Denyal, *Pe-*
ter remembered the word of the Lord, and
went out and wept bitterly. Let us lay our
 hand upon our Heart, and consider in time
 whether we are going: That one Wicked-
 ness will introduce another, as Adultery
 the way for the Murther of *Uriah* and
 the *Baptist*: That some Crimes will

lay waste the Mind, and make havock
 it altogether; and that a wilful Conti-
 nance in any one Sin will by degrees be-
 qually destructive: That our Day of Grace
 may be soon over, and God only knows
 this very Day may conclude it, and that
 this very Discourse (how weak soever it
 may be the last Call vouchsafed to souls
 here present. Despise not then the Riches
 of God's Forbearance and Long-suffering
 but know that his Goodness is design'd
 lead thee to Repentance; and if it cannot
 induce thee to this, then will he cover thee
 with such a Blindness of Mind, and Har-
 diness of Heart, that thou shalt only treasure
 up Wrath against the Day of Wrath.

But, 2. From what has been said
 cannot but observe, how grievously ac-
 countable such Men are, who, notwith-
 standing the Light of the Gospel, have
 not so much even as the Faith of *Hebrews*.
 The *Resurrection* was not expressly con-
 tained in the Law, and therefore exploded
 the *Sadducees*; the Men of Thought and Ap-
 plication might deduce it perhaps from the
 Declaration, wherein God proclaims him-
 self to be the *God of departed Abraham, Isaac*

St. James's, Aug. 8. 1714. 15

and *Jacob*: They might infer it likewise from
two Children raised to Life by *Elijah* and
Elisha: But what is all this to the Gospel-
evidence of a general Resurrection; where
is directly, constantly, and in the most
express Terms asserted: where Christ raised
himself and others from the Dead, and all
the Miracles that were done by him and by
the Apostles, were done in Confirmation of
his Doctrine? And yet *Herod* came into it
on Deductions only from *Moses* and the
prophets, and said, *It is John whom I be-
headed, he is risen from the Dead*. But, alas!
we have still such *Fools* as say in their Heart,
*there is no Resurrection, neither Angel, nor
spirit*. And of this unhappy kind we meet
more since the coming of Christ, than
all the preceding Ages of Darknes; and
the Reason of it I take to be this: That
while the *Gentiles* had only a faint and glim-
mering notion of another Life, they cou'd
enjoy their Sins with less Disturbance, and
consequently had less Temptation to turn
from *beasts*; but now the *Sun of Righteousness*
is risen, and ungrateful Duties are expressly
commanded: Now the Flames of eternal
torments glare full upon the Sinner, and

there is no bearing the Gospel and his together: He rises with Indignation draw the Curtain, and to reject the Light because his Deeds are evil, and because resolves that they shall be so. But be had it been, yea much more tolerable such Men, that they had never heard Christ; for *Herod* himself will rise up Judgment against them; and if, after all Expende of Revelation and Miracle they set themselves against knowing their Master's Will, they shall be *beaten with many Stripes*.

Thirdly and Lastly, We have seen the terrible Shifts wicked Men are continually used to make for a little Respite and forgetfulness; and in particular, what *Great Man* in my Text suffered from within for the Murther of the *Prophet*: And now let us turn our Eyes from *Herod*, and take a short view of the *Righteous*; and here, on this *very* just and *very* lamentable occasion, I will not, I cannot forbear look back a while upon our late, but never to be forgotten *Queen*, who exercised her self all the *various Trials* of Life to have always a Conscience void of Offence toward God

St. James s, Aug. 8. 1714. 17

ward Men: Who not only *did his Prophets*
harm, and shed no *innocent Blood*, but laid
all Her Power in Labours of Love, and
works of Mercy, in the Glory of God and
the Happiness of Mankind: In sheathing
the devouring Sword, in cultivating the
seeds of Peace and universal good Nature,
propagating the Gospel to a strange
people, in building us Churches and
making our Religion lovely at home by
her own Example, and in transmitting the
beauty of Holiness pure and undefiled to the
children yet unborn. Her gracious Influen-
ce descended upon all Her Subjects *like the*
drops of Dew that water the Earth; and in
kindness and Long-suffering She was one of
the fairest Children of our *Father which is*
Heaven, who *maketh his Sun to rise on*
the Evil and on the Good, and sendeth Rain
on the Just and on the Unjust. Let Her Me-
mory therefore be ever precious among us;
and if all those, who have tasted and seen
how good and gracious She was in every
stage of Life, will but strow their just Praises
and Flowers upon Her Grave, then surely
we must All, from the *Highest* to the *Lowest*,
and about Her *Weeping*, as the grateful
Widows

Widows did about the dead *Dorcas*, *she*
the Coats and Garments she made, and al
wondrous Great, Pious, and Benefi
Things *she* did *while She was with us*.
if the *Spirits* of Just Men departed have
Sense of what the Living do, we may
on to gratify Her even in Paradise; by
ding fast that Faith *She* so earnestly cont
ded for, and by translating our Allegia
and Affections to his Sacred Majesty our
sent Gracious Sovereign, whom the Law
the Land and the Care of the Queen h
wisely provided and secured for the per
tual Defence of our Religion and Lib
ties. Such then was the constant P
ctice of our *late Queen*, who cou'd not f
in Her Heart to do or say a hard thing
any of Her People; and consequently f
a Conscience must of it self be an exceed
great Reward, more worth than thousan
of Gold and Silver, and infinitely more de
rable at Her *latter End* than the Crown S
wore; and in one word, the most divi
Satisfaction on this side Heaven. Such
Conscience refresh'd our Queen upon
Bed of Languishing as supported the go
Hezekiah, and made all Her Bed in H
Sickne

St. James's, Aug. 17, 1744
bless: It brought to Her Remembrance
that Day of Trouble all the lovely Actions
Her Life, and reviv'd Her with the Joy
a perfect Heart: And tho' it added not
to Her Days (perhaps for Her own sake)
seven Years, yet it carried Her the sooner to
that Place of Rest Her Soul had been long
upon, and where all Tears now are wiped
from Her Eyes. It was a Conscience void
of Offence that made Paul and Silas sing in
Prison and in an Earthquake: That made
Peter, tho' between two Soldiers and bound
with two Chains, sleep so fast, that the Bright-
ness of the Angel cou'd not wake him till he
tore him on the side. As for the ungodly
is not so with them; but in their Distress a
terrible Fear overwhelmeth them, and will
not suffer their Eyes to sleep, nor their Eyes
to slumber: Guilt spreads over them an
heavy night; an Image of that
darkness which shall afterwards
overtake them, and they are unto themselves
more grievous, than all their Calamities from
without. But Light is sown for the Righteous,
and springeth up in due season: Mark the
perfect Man and behold the upright, for the
fruit of that Man is Peace: The Captives he
hath

* Wisd. xvii.
21, &c.

...redeemed, the Prisoners he hath re-
...the Hungry he hath fed, the naked
...hath clothed, and all the good Deeds he
...ever done (Visions of inexpressible Joy
...a Bed of Sickness) shall stand about him
...goodly Aray at the last Hour, and speak
...to his Soul: Then he shall hear the Voice
...an acquitting Conscience, not as the Noise
...Waters sounding dreadfully about him,
...as the still Voice of God, saying, Come
...blessed Children receive the Kingdom pre-
...red for you. *Who so is wise will ponder the*
things, and they shall understand the love
kindness of the Lord: Understand and
...it thro' the whole course of their Lives, &
...especially at their Journeys end; Wh
...God of his infinite Mercy Grant we may
...do for Jesus Christ's sake, &c.



F I N I S.

